

REMARKS

In accordance with the foregoing, various of the claims are amended to improve form and without change of substance or introduction of new matter. Accordingly, approval and entry of the amended claims are respectfully requested.

STATUS OF CLAIMS

Claims 1-18 are pending herein.

All of the pending claims are rejected.

ITEMS 2-12: REJECTION OF CLAIMS 1-18 FOR OBVIOUSNESS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103 OVER WICAL (U.S. PATENT 5,940,821) IN VIEW OREN ET AL. (U.S. PATENT 6,240,401)

The rejections are respectfully traversed.

The present invention relates to a 'network community supporting system.' Specially, as disclosed in the originally filed specification at page 4, lines 13-26, the present invention affords advantages of a network community, in that bi-directional communications between participants are enabled and, also, the contents of the communications may be shared among the participants, along with the use of themes which serve as guidelines for the members, and thereby voluntary messages of the members may be easily drawn out; also, by comparing the messages with the themes and analyzing them, it becomes possible to obtain both message analysis and theme analysis results.

In contrast thereto, Wical's "Information Representation in a Knowledge Base Search and Retrieval System" relates to a method of processing queries in a search and retrieval system. According to this method, in response to a large amount of submitted query terms, target information is retrieved from a large amount of text information (documents). This is altogether different from the present invention.

First of all, the present invention services a network community including members thereof as participants. In contrast thereto, according to the Wical's art, the system merely handles queries submitted by users. According to the Wical's art, there is no concept of a 'community' i.e., a group of participants, nor of 'themes of the community,' as claimed in claim 1 of the present application.

According to the Wical's art, after a target document is once retrieved, a relation with the user is finished. In contrast thereto and according to the present invention, the theme database

is updated, as claimed in claim 1, which database stores the themes of the network community. Therefore, according to the present invention, the thus-updated themes of the community, are then used for the relevant community, again and again.

In fact, according to the present invention, an object is to drawn out, and thus collect, users' comments on specific products, lifestyles, subconscious needs and so forth (as disclosed in the originally filed specification, page 1, line 20 through page 4, line 10). For this purpose, messages from the community to which the users belong are collected and compared with the themes of the community, and thus are analyzed, and therewith, the themes of the community are updated. As a result, a flow of the messages of the community gradually develops and, as a result, life styles, real intentions/subconscious needs and so forth of the participants (users) become easier to drawn out.

As pointed out in the specification at page 4, line 10 et. seq., the method and system of the invention render it possible to produce bi-directional communications between users and to drawn out further voluntary messages of members by utilizing the themes, which are used as common guidelines of the members, wherein the messages are analyzed and, based on comparison with the themes, message analysis results and theme analysis results are obtained. Further, as discussed at pages 5-6, the theme classifying and renewing/updating parts of the invention serve to make information, as determined by an organizer of the community, match the interest of the participants of the community, to encourage participants in greater participation and to provide useful messages while avoiding useless messages. Further, the themes serve as guidelines for promoting activities and, since the themes correlate to the interest of the members, it is possible to prevent the system from soliciting merely complaints against products and services, or fights between members, etc., and instead to provide useful messages aligned with the interests of the community.

Wical has no such bi-directional communication concept and indeed does not establish any database based on messages from users. Instead, Wical merely processes queries received from users of the system and provides for manipulation or processing of the queries so as to identify plural topics for documents encompassed by the queries, and then, to develop relationships between documents and grouping of topics. None of the subject matter of the documents is produced as a result of any message, much less any query, from a user. The Wical System simply is unrelated to any such purpose or operation. Clearly, the features and advantages of the present invention, as claimed, are neither disclosed by or obvious in view of Wical.

Oren et al., relates to a "System and Method for Movie Transaction Processing", and has no apparent relevance at all to the art of handling a "network community" in accordance with the present invention, as claimed herein or to the search and retrieval system of Wical. Indeed, it appears that Oren et al. is relied on only for teaching updating of a database with new information (as cited collectively for Oren and other secondary references at page 3, the second full paragraph, of the Action.)

**THE COMBINATION OF WICAL AND OREN IS FATALLY DEFICIENT FOR LACK OF ANY
PRIMA FACIE DEMONSTRATION OF OBVIOUSNESS MPEP 2143-2143.03**

Oren is cited for disclosing at col. 20, lines 7-12, updating a database based on results of "analyzing authorization transactions and access transactions...." This citation in fact is to a dependent claim 4 which, while recited the foregoing, provides no teaching of how that is accomplished - - even assuming that were relevant to the present.

It is submitted to be unnecessary for applicants to analyze the teaching of Oren, since the cited language of claim 4/1 has no self-apparent relation to the claimed subject matter of the present invention. Particularly, "authorization transactions "relate to gaining legitimate access to move content for a fee" - - concepts altogether foreign to the "network community supporting method and system" to which the present invention relates.

Further, the Examiner relies solely on the contention of "it would have been obvious..." to combine Oren with Wical, which MPEP 2143-2143.03 rejects as altogether inadequate to support the combination.

CONCLUSION

In accordance with the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the pending claims patentably distinguish over the references of record, taken singularly or any proper combination and, there being no other objections or rejections, and that the application is condition for allowance which action is earnestly solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

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If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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